



Chairman Julius Genachowski
Commissioner Meredith Attwell Baker
Commissioner Mignon Clyburn
Commissioner Michael J. Copps
Commissioner Robert M. McDowell

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: GN Docket No. 09-191

March 31, 2010

Dear Chairman Genachowski and Commissioners:

On behalf of ASPIRA, we are pleased to have the opportunity to submit reply comments on the Commission's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on the Open Internet. The ASPIRA Association is the only national Hispanic organization dedicated exclusively to developing the educational and leadership capacity of Hispanic youth. Since 1961, ASPIRA has been working at the grass-roots level to provide programs that encourage Hispanic students to stay in school, prepare them to succeed in the educational arena, develop their leadership skills, and to serve their community.

We clearly understand the enormous value that technology can bring to our students' education. Bridging the digital divide can go a long way in bridging the education divide as well. Broadband has quickly and seamlessly become enmeshed in our children's education, creating wonderful new opportunities for learning that supplement the classroom experience.

However, what happens to the students who do not have an Internet connection at home? While the integration of the Internet into schoolwork has been easy for some students, for others it creates more of a challenge, such as the ones served by ASPIRA in low-income communities across the country. These students must rely on computer labs and libraries that are often overcrowded and inconvenient.

We hope that the Commission will seize the opportunity to ensure that all students are able to connect to broadband technology at home. The educational benefits of home broadband connections to students are undeniable. At a September Commission Meeting, FCC staff revealed that four out of five parents say that the Internet helps their children with their schoolwork. Internet access, today more than ever, is linked to the educational success of students.

We are concerned, however, that net neutrality rules could inhibit Internet service providers' flexibility to reasonably manage their networks, and that this could result in overburdened networks that would seriously limit the Internet experience of our low-income students, such as limiting access to high quality online learning programs that enhance student learning.

Furthermore, these regulations could deter providers from maintaining sizable investments in their networks, potentially passing these costs onto consumers. In light of our country's current economic climate, consumers cannot afford to see higher monthly broadband bills. If consumers were forced to sacrifice their broadband service and new users were unable to get online, families across the country would be unable to pass on the economic, educational and social benefits of broadband to their children.

We understand that, at some point in the future, reasonable regulation of network management may become necessary to ensure that the Internet is free, open and accessible to all. However, we believe that this point has not been reached and that regulation is not yet necessary.

We urge the Commission to focus on policies that will promote broadband deployment and adoption and that allow providers to ensure the highest degree of access to all, since all students should have the opportunity to experience an education for the 21st century.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kenneth F. Blackman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

President and CEO